FY 2017
SMALL NEPA PROJECT DESCRIPTION
Nez Perce-Clearwater National Forests

Please **do not leave any field BLANK**, unless it does not apply.
Submit form (Word doc) electronically to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us by **May 5, 2017.**

(NOTE: Italicized comments are for reference only. You may delete them when completing form.)

Project Name	Cherry Exploration drilling
District name (or "Forestwide")	Red River Ranger District
County(ies) where project located?	Idaho
FS Personnel Name, Phone Number and Email *If a partnership, please add name, phone and email, but an FS employee MUST be the project proponent and point of contact.*	Marty Jones (208)983-5158 martinjones@fs.fed.us
Legal Location *Township(s), Range(s), and Section(s) must be entered.*	T29N, R9E, Sections 29, 30
District Ranger / Line Officer's Name *Person(s) responsible for signing the decision document*	Terry Nevius
Is the project associated with meeting a Forest target?	Yes
Watershed and subwatershed the project is located?	Kirks Fork, tributary to American River

Which CE Category does this project fit?* *Provide citation: 36CFR 220.6(d)(x) or 36 CFR 220.6(e)(x)* *See - O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\CE Categories*	***36 CFR 220.6(e)(8)***) Short-term (1 year or less) mineral, energy, or geophysical investigations and their incidental support activities that may require cross-country travel by vehicles and equipment, construction of less than 1 mile of low standard road, or use and minor repair of existing roads. Examples include but are not limited to: (i) Authorizing geophysical investigations which use existing roads that may require incidental repair to reach sites for drilling core holes, temperature gradient holes, or seismic shot holes; (ii) Gathering geophysical data using shot hole, vibroseis, or surface charge methods; (iii) Trenching to obtain evidence of mineralization; (iv) Clearing vegetation for sight paths or from areas used for investigation or support facilities; (v) Redesigning or rearranging surface facilities within an approved site; (vi) Approving interim and final site restoration measures; and (vii) Approving a plan for exploration which authorizes repair of an existing road and the construction of 1/3 mile of temporary road; clearing vegetation from an acre of land for trenches, drill pads, or support facilities.

*** Projects that fit in a "36 CFR 220.6 (d)" category do not require a written Project Record or a Decision document.** (*See - O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\CE Categories)*

Do you want to submit the project for consideration in the Small NEPA process? Y___ N___

If no, this form does not need to be submitted to the Small NEPA planner.

If yes, see instructions below regarding scoping level.

*** If the project fits under a "36 CFR 220.6(e)" category (Project Record and Decision required), or is being submitted for small nepa consideration under a "36 CFR 220.6 (d)" category, at what level should the project be scoped?**

Internal___ External X_

List the Management Area(s) in which your project is located.

15B

What are the desired conditions for the Management Area(s)?

A. Description

Management Area 15 is composed of intermingled acreages of lands similar to those found in Management Areas 12 and 16. This area consists of forested lands, some of which are winter habitat for deer and elk. Timber productivity classes 3, 4, 5 and 6 are included in this area, as are a variety of physical and biological environments. The deer and elk winter habitat is generally located below 4,500 feet and is on southerly and westerly aspects. This management area occurs Forestwide on the nonclassified portion of the Forest.

B. Goals

Manage to produce sustained yields of sawtimber and other wood products, while improving the quality of the deer and elk winter habitat on the appropriate areas. Because of the mosaic created by these two management emphases, implementation will require additional coordination in terms of timing and spatial arrangement to assure that the timber and wildlife goals are achieved.

The goal for summer elk habitat in this management area is to manage 5,011 acres to achieve at least 75 percent of habitat potential; 23,938 acres to achieve at least 50 percent of habitat potential; and 10,427 acres to achieve at least 25 percent of habitat potential. Specific methods of how to achieve this will be determined on a site-specific basis during project planning (see Appendix B).

Is the project in a Roadless Area? No

** If yes, answer the questions in the 'Project in Roadless Area' table below,* ***AND*** *complete a Briefing Paper - note special requirements for maps. Provide the completed Briefing Paper to Environmental Coordinator and Brian Riggers prior to scoping.*

(See O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\ Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\ Reference Material\ Roadless Rule Info\General Roadless Info for Briefing Paper Info and Template.)

Is the project in a congressionally designated area, ex. Wilderness, Wild & Scenic River Corridor, Research Natural Area, Historic Trail, etc.? No

If yes, which one(s)?

** If yes, you must contact Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us, 935-4270, BEFORE submitting this proposal, to discuss how the project may affect the area.*

1987 Forest Plan maps are found at O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Management Areas

Does the project involve road construction, reconstruction, temporary roads, or haul routes?
Yes*

** If yes, answer the questions in the 'Project Involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, or Haul Routes' table below.*

Are Municipal Watersheds located in the project area? No
If yes, which one(s)?

Are there Floodplains or Wetlands in the project area? Yes

Is the project located in an RHCA? Yes

Is the project in the Hell's Canyon National Recreation Area? No

Describe the existing condition(s) of the project area.

Current Condition

The project area lies within previously disturbed and undisturbed areas within the Kirk's Fork drainage. The area is vegetated with predominately upland vegetation and timber of mixed species, along with areas of riparian vegetation.

What is the Purpose and Need for the proposed action? *The* purpose and need *describes - Why the action is being proposed at this location and at this time (need) and the desired objectives/outcomes of the action (purpose).*

Purpose and Need

The purpose of the proposed action is to test for gold values on unpatented mining claims. The need is to determine if sufficient quantities of valuable minerals exist to warrant further development of a mining operation.

Describe the Proposed Action:

Blue Ribbon, LLC, proposes exploratory drilling in the Kirk's Fork area of the Red River Ranger District. The project is located at Township 29N, Range 9E, Sections 29 and 30, Boise Meridian. The project area is accessed by taking State Highway 14 to Forest Road 222 (Red River Road), then to Forest Road 9832 approximately 2.75miles. From this point approximately .65 mile of temporary road will need to be constructed to access the project area.

This proposal is for a total of four drill sites. Each of these drill sites is anticipated to be approximately 30' X 50' in size. . A maximum of two holes may be drilled at each site. These holes are anticipated to be 3"to 6" in diameter and from 750' to 1000' deep. Drilling depths may be adjusted as targets become more defined. These holes will be drilled using a self contained, track mounted drill rig. The drill rig will be self leveling to minimize the need for a leveling excavation of the drill area. A sump or infiltration gallery will be dug at each site to contain drill fluid and to allow drill cuttings to settle out. This sump will measure approximately 2' wide by 3'-4' deep and approximately 20' long. Drill fluid will be comprised of water and a clay derivative. The operation will require between 500 and 1000 gallons of water per day per drill rig. In the event that water is used from Forest lands, a water use permit will be obtained from the Idaho Department of Water Resources, and the water withdrawal site will be reviewed by Forest Service specialists before water is taken from any stream.

Upon completion of drilling, each drill hole will be filled and plugged according to the State of Idaho Best Management Practices (BMP's) for filling and plugging drill holes. Upon abandonment of a drill site, sumps will be allowed to dewater through percolation and evaporation, then backfilled. Topsoil will be replaced, duff and woody debris scattered over the area if available, and the area seeded and mulched as necessary. If earth leveling is required for any drill pad the area will be restored to original contour, topsoil replaced, and the site will be revegetated. Each site will be reclaimed when work at that site is completed before moving on to the next drill site.

Approximately .65 mile of temporary road will be required in order to access the project area. The exact location of this road will be determined by a field review which will include the operator and Forest Service specialists. Each individual drill site will be accessed using existing access roads, old road templates or by overland travel when possible, though some minor temporary road construction will be required to access some of the sites. All constructed roads will be obliterated and reclaimed after exploration work has been completed. Areas impacted by equipment travel will be reconditioned as needed, mulched with existing duff and woody debris, and seeded as required as part of the reclamation of the drill site it accesses. 4 X 4 pickups will be used to support drilling activities. Other equipment used will be a small backhoe to dig infiltration galleries, a small cat to conduct reclamation activities, and 4x4 ATVs. A low ground pressure ATV or a pickup truck will be used to transport drill core and supplies.

Only one site will be active at any one time. Bonding will be based on one active drill site and one site being reclaimed at any given time. As drilling is nearing completion at one site, the next site will be prepared ahead of time to minimize the amount of time the drill rig will need to sit idle. Once the drill rig has been removed from a site, needed reclamation will be completed for that site as soon as practicable. A reclamation bond will be calculated based on the estimated cost of reclaiming each active and each recently abandoned site. A bond sufficient to cover the cost of all anticipated surface disturbance will be submitted by the operator before the Plan of Operation is approved and before work may begin.

List the design criteria/mitigation measures to be included with the proposed action.
Design criteria are included as part of the State of Idaho Best Management Practices for Mining, included as an attachment to this document.

List the Best Management Practices (BMPs) to be included with the proposed action.
Best Management Practices for Mining for the State of Idaho. This document is approximately 158 pages long and is included by reference as an attachment to this document.

At a minimum, consider appropriate BMPs for water quality standards and weed management.
Source documents for approved BMPs can be found at – O: NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\ Planning\ Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\BMPs

Specific individuals/groups/businesses* (*<u>with mailing addresses</u>*) in the district(s) impacted by the project who should be contacted during the Scoping Process. <u>Do not provide just a name</u>.

(NOTE: tribal / state / county governments and agencies will already be contacted)*

Please attach to your project submission email, separate from this form, a GIS-generated map or maps of the project area (pdf format only) per the instructions outlined below. Do not give links to maps or datasets. Please make sure that the layers can be turned on/off on your PDF map(s).

At least one map, with (preferably) a "portrait" orientation, showing the project location/activities as points, e.g. culvert, mineral exploration site, etc.; lines, e.g. fence, road, creek, etc.; and/or the project boundary as a polygon, e.g. stand, treatment area, etc. Do not use a point when treating an area, use a polygon.

The map(s) needs to include identifying features, such as towns, roads, trails, rivers/streams, geophysical landmarks, etc. to identify where the project is on the landscape

Please use the Forest Visitor Map as your map's base layer (see below*). This will standardize the appearance of the maps for scoping. Please do not add contour lines to the map unless needed. Contour lines make the map difficult to read. A topo map may be used as a substitute for the FV Map, as long as there are sufficient identifying features on the base layer that can be used to identify the project's location. If contour lines are not important to defining the location they should be turned off.

The preferred (not required) scale is 1:24000. If the project area can't be adequately shown at 1:24K, use a larger scale (> 1:24K) showing the entire project area and if needed, provide additional maps showing details of the project activities. **Please make as few maps as possible**. Conversely, if the 1:24K scale is too large (i.e. the project / action area is a tiny point or a thin line hard to find on a large landscape), use a smaller scale (< 1:24K) to provide more detail while ensuring that the project area's/activities' location is identifiable.

All maps should include, at a minimum, a **Title** (i.e. include only the district and the project name); a **Legend** with the project feature(s) clearly labeled, e.g. culvert replacement, fence line, x treatment area, etc.; a **Scale** in miles (not km) using full miles, such as 0_0.25_0.5_1.0 miles (ending with 0.5 miles okay); and a **North arrow**. Use a black outlined box with a white background (not gray) to display them.

The main point is, the map(s) are used mostly for scoping purposes (see Shapefiles below), to show the public, as clearly and efficiently as possible, what activity or activities are being proposed and where the activity or activities are located on the Forest.

** The Small NEPA geodatabase contains feature classes, including the Forest Visitor Map, that can be used for map creation. The geodatabase is found at:*

T:\FS\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\GIS\SmallNEPA.gdb

If you need help with accessing and/or working with the geodatabase in GIS, contact your Zone GIS Specialist (first) or you can contact Jim Lutes at jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202.

SHAPEFILES

The resource specialists want the shapefile(s) of the project's proposed activity(ies) before they will begin their analyses. The shapefile(s) need to be labeled with a Project Name and the Feature. For example, Peasley culvert replace, Brushy Fork road decom, PC thinning _NFRD, etc. The shapefile(s) must follow these instructions* or they will not be accepted and the project will delayed until they are met.

*The Project Proponent needs to send the shapefile including the following extensions – .dbf, .prj, .sbn, .shp, .shx, and .xml – to jjchynoweth@fs.fed.us prior to or when the District Ranger submits this form.

Note: Providing where the shapefile(s) can be found (O drive/T drive) does not meet this obligation. Providing the shapefile(s) **does not substitute** for providing the map(s).

Small NEPA IDT/resource specialists are listed below. Contact them if you have any questions regarding their resource and your project.

Botany – Mike Hays, mhays01@fs.fed.us; 983-4028
Cultural – Steve Lucas, slucas@fs.fed.us; 983-4040
Fisheries – Christine Stewart, christinestewart@fs.fed.us; 963-4211
Fisheries (detail) – Tim Price, tprice@fs.fed.us; 935-2513 (main office number)
Hydrology – Cynthia Valle, cvalle@fs.fed.us; 963-4203
Minerals – Marty Jones, martinjones@fs.fed.us; 983-5158
Recreation – Carol Hennessey, cahennessey@fs.fed.us; 935-4270
Soils – Robert Bergstrom, robertbergstrom@fs.fed.us; 963-4287
Wildlife – Jim Lutes, jamesrlutes@fs.fed.us; 963-4202

Project in Roadless Area

What is the Roadless Area name? *O:\NFS\NezPerceClearwater\Project\MultiBasin\Planning\Small_NEPA_Cat_Ex\Reference Material\Roadless Rule Info*	**Idaho Roadless Area (IRA) Name:** **Forest Plan IRA Name *(if different):***
Identify the Idaho Roadless Management classification because permitted activities vary by classification. *Classifications include:* • *Wild Land Recreation* • *Special Areas of Historic or Tribal Significance* • *Primitive* • *Backcountry Restoration* • *General Forest, Rangeland and Grassland*	**Classification:**
Does the project involve constructing or reconstructing roads? Yes* No * If yes, see *http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2* then navigate to Subpart C 294.23	
Does the project involve cutting trees? Yes* No * *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2* then navigate to Subpart C 294.24	
Does the project involve removing minerals, including common variety minerals? Yes* No * *If yes, see http://www.gpo.gov/fdsys/pkg/CFR-2011-title36-vol2* then navigate to Subpart C 294.25	

Project Involving Road Construction, Reconstruction, Temporary Roads, and/or Haul Routes

Note: Specialists will address items 9-11 *(in italics)* below.

ACCESS CONSIDERATIONS	YES / NO	MITIGATION MEASURE/COMMENTS
1. Will road construction or reconstruction be required? Type of road and length.	Yes	.65 mile of low standard temporaryroad will need to be constructed.
2. Will temporary roads be needed?	Yes	
3. Will road maintenance be needed? Who will perform?		Operator will perform all needed maintenance.
4. Will there be a change to the current road restrictions?	No	
5. Are haul roads part of an established snowmobile network?	No	
6. Are there public safety concerns for roads, trails, or other road improvements?	No	
7. Are there other improvements which will require protection?	No	
8. Does the area currently meet Forest Plan standards for soils?		
9. Will the project impact elk security?		
10. Will the project or log haul impact winter range?		
11. Will the project impact critical elk summer range?		

JC : 8/19/2016

Additional Information: